

Habitat III Intergovernmental negotiations in New York – Third session - Statement on behalf of the EU and its Member States – Thursday 19 May 2016

Dear Chair, Dear Delegates,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the EU and its MS.

We want to thank the bureau, and especially the two co-Chairs, and use this opportunity to share our support for the three transformative commitments. We fully acknowledge that only if we commit to embrace these commitments we can fully harness the potential of urbanization for sustainable development and achieve the ambitious goals set by the 2030 Agenda. In addition we would like to call for the following points to be taken into consideration.

Leave no one behind and fight against poverty

Removing barriers (including social-cultural ones) that prevent all inhabitants to participate in urban life is a priority.

Access to **public services** is also key for realizing the demand to leave nobody behind. In this context we would like to stress the importance of access to safe affordable drinking water , of access to sanitation and of eliminating forced evictions. (OP26)

Migration towards cities will keep increasing. For that reason it is crucial to include a definition of the various forms of migration (OP20) and use clear language (OP 24). We should recognize the contribution of migrants to society as well as their need for support by host communities and we should advocate for increased international cooperation to ensure safe, orderly and regular migration, ensuring full respect for human rights and the humane treatment of migrants regardless of their migratory status (OP 24).

We call for housing to be elevated as one of the highest priorities for national governments, and we reaffirm the right to adequate housing for all as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living without discrimination of any kind. While we agree on the need to redefine our relationship with **informal settlements** and slums, there should also be a continuous effort for formalization in order to guarantee that no one is trapped in informality. We also encourage the formalization of the informal economy (OP31 and OP58).

In order to address the needs of marginalized communities and homeless persons, **housing** interventions should be coupled with integrated and long-term dedicated policies aiming to meet their socio-economic and cultural integration (OP32).

A legal framework for **secure tenure** providing tenants reliable and enforceable rights matching the protection of property rights of landlords, as well as gender neutral laws for inheriting land, should also be promoted. (OP33)

Sustainable and inclusive urban prosperity and opportunities for all

We would like to underline the importance of fostering an **enabling environment** for investment and innovation attracting businesses including regulatory and legislative frameworks that increase predictability and security for businesses (OP45 and OP48)

We would welcome the inclusion of a reference to the principles of the green economy and support the promotion of a green and inclusive urban economy (OP58).

As regards the aspect of an urban economy model, built on local resources and competitive advantages, it is important to be mindful of international trade agreements and that no impediments to trade are created. (OP46)

Integrated and place-based support measures should be facilitated as a **place based approach** is key for taking into account the territorial and cultural specificities of cities and their surroundings in the selection and design of the urban form and infrastructure (OP50)

Reliable **supply** and value **chains** play an important role in connecting urban demand and rural supply. Just as important is an efficient spatial network promoting affordable, accessible, low carbon transport and **mobility** systems, and increasing public transport, walking and cycling (OP51).

We underline the importance to address the issue of **food security** and nutrition in the New Urban Agenda which is not the case in the present zero draft. The integration of food and nutrition into urban planning contributes to the realization of the three dimensions of sustainable development and to the resilience of cities, knowing that urban food systems are especially vulnerable to crises.

Improving the business environment to promote prosperous and innovative cities calls for access to **smart multiple** ICT solutions and clean technology in line with the Smart city concept. The Smart City concept should be included in the New Urban Agenda as it can make every day life easier for the public. (59)

More emphasis should be placed on the spatial impact of development and urban design. This implies fostering the principle of multiple **use of space** and developing a new set of standards, applied by taking into account the territorial and cultural specificities of cities according to a place-based approach in the choice and design of the urban form and infrastructure, that promotes cost efficiencies, clustering and co-benefits and growth in the urban economy.

The specific challenges and opportunities for **small and medium urban cities** and the potential of polycentric territorial development should be highlighted, as well as the importance to work across the urban - rural continuum including catchment areas to achieve territorial cohesion.

Foster ecological and resilient cities and human settlements

A reference to **planetary boundaries** and a reference towards minimization of hazardous chemicals should be included. More focus should be given to improve water and air quality. Not only are we committed to the environmentally sound management of waste. Moreover, waste should be converted to energy when it delivers the best environmental outcome (OP 76), we should be striving towards a long-term transition towards a circular economy and improved resource efficiency and promote sustainable consumption and production (OP 74). A call for Member States to accede to relevant **Multilateral Environmental Agreements** would be welcome in this regard.

To promote a sustainable urban metabolism we should make best use of natural resources and focus on **resource - efficiency** of raw materials like concrete, metals, minerals, water and land, facilitate urban mining, establish material recovery facilities, and build sustainable and resilient buildings utilizing local materials (OP78). Urban ecology fosters urban economies, while reducing urban inequalities and promoting rural-urban partnerships.

To make our cities resilient to natural and human made **disasters** it is important to shift from reactive to preventive approaches and implement risk-informed development, at the city and community level, aimed at preventing (water related) disasters and mitigating their impacts (OP83 & OP81). Preventive infrastructure - both technological and nature based solutions - and planning are key in this regard to maximally protect cities.

More generally, the role of **eco-systemic services** should be further underlined together with nature-based solutions, with regard to green public spaces and also blue and green infrastructures.

We support the commitment regarding **delta areas**, coastal and other environmental critical areas and hotspots that combine socio-economic and natural/ environmental dynamics in different regions of the world.

A shift towards a **low-carbon energy** system in urban areas is essential, building on an increased focus on energy efficiency and integrated mobility planning for climate mitigation (OP 78).

We again want to underline the importance of stressing the need for integrated cross-sectorial planning throughout the document. This is especially important with regards to climate change and we therefore strongly encourage calling for the inclusion of aspects of mitigation and resilience in the design of urban services and infrastructure.

We are ready to share with you more concrete drafting proposals.

Thank you!